

**Two Micro-Essays by  
Olchar E. Lindsann:**

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**Notes on Organising  
Communal Events**  
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**On Feminism in  
Utopian & Marxist  
Socialism**

# Notes on Organising Communal Events

In what terms do we spacialise social praxis, when we conceptualise the transformations we wish to bring about?

We may attempt to effect the *contours* of the social field, to redefine the edges of what we conceive as socially possible, the shape of our communal horizons.

We may encourage a particular *trajectory*, a progressive development or movement of a community's praxis from one set of co-ordinates to another, following a horizon whose continual withdrawal we affect in order to shift the centre of communal activity in a direction designated as 'forward'.

We may seek to redefine the social *landscape* of a community, the options and recognised activities which present themselves as habitual opportunities for engagement, through which collective life organises or

orients itself. Or we may seek to transform the *texture* of social experience, the modalities of everyday life that lay below whatever threshold of 'event' or proper 'practice' pertains at a given moment.

The way in which the 'event' situates itself in relation to the social life into which it is an intervention will take on a different character in relation to these various models. To the extent that it seeks to extend the *contours* of the possible, it will seek an elusive *jouissance*, a moment of experience exceeding our ability to socially articulate it. To the extent that it aims toward a *trajectory*, it will cultivate a particular kind of inadequacy, a spur toward desire that will *point* its participants toward something beyond itself. In seeking to affect the social *landscape*, it will concern itself with a characteristic *pleasure*, and be attentive for possibilities of growth-in-repetition, for the capacity of this *pleasure* to act as a vehicle of both grounding and

growth. To the extent that it seeks to affect the texture of social life, it will concern itself with the percolation of its effects 'down' into the communal soil, the integration of its activities into the semi-conscious of the community, where a circumscribed 'event' will no longer be necessary in order to perpetuate the practices or awarenesses that it fosters.



## **On Feminism in Utopian and Marxist Socialism**

The phallocentrism that Marxist hegemony established within socialism: Notwithstanding Marxism's alleged hostility to religion of any kind, it espouses an entirely orthodox religious conception of social change. The capacity for change is invested solely in a Revolution on the millenarian model: buttressed by an asceticism of the present (no fundamental change until the universal proletarian

uprising), a distance from the Ideal is maintained and deferred until The Moment of Truth, the moment of Overturning when everything turns inside out in one spectacular shudder of history, smashing and destroying the old order. The Revolution will come like God, separating the worthy from the unworthy, a kind of historico-celestial taxonomist, whilst the Proletariat, like the Four Riders of the Apocalypse, go about their fated business of establishing the earthly paradise.

Ironically, the utopian socialisms whose models were effaced by the Marxist hegemony, and who so often (Saint-Simon, Fourier) framed their discourses in religious terms, in fact conceived of change on a more materialist basis (in a sense hostile to the Hegelian Idealist-Materialism to which Marx and Engels fell prey despite themselves). In this more

organic conception, the phalanstery is a seed, planted in the social soil: the transformation of society is likened not to a tiresome Oedipal drama, but instead to the planting of a forest, and the gradual symbiotic transformation of an environment.

Likewise, it is no wonder that Feminism, so central to socialist discourse early in the 19th Century, became a merely tertiary concern in the wake of Marxism, despite Marx and Engels being in no way hostile to its principles. Marxism is rigidly phallocentric, indeed it never ceases to conceive the phenomenon of Revolution in terms of a seizing of the centralised State-Phallus, a single orgasmic *juissance* that gives access to an entry into 'power' from the top of an inherited hierarchy, whose effects will then trickle back down to an abstracted populace from whom the energy had originated.

'We' will all share Power after the Revolution, but only by all being given a share of the phallus. And this Phallus-State will be directed by, infused with, an Ideology which will activate its power.

What room is there in this vision for the diffused network of autonomous communities envisioned by other socialisms; for the slow and unpredictable growth of new patterns of life which, while sharing many structural principles and perhaps a common inspiration, nonetheless cannot be submitted to any central authority? Models in which actual revolutionary practice is set in motion on microcosmic scale, to succeed or fail in the midst of what it opposes, without the intervention of the World Spirit, even in Communist form? Models in which, in the last analysis, the specificity of the commune, of the particular *attempt*—that which

will resist both ideological speculation and the priority of numbers, of quantity, in designating 'success'—will ultimately determine the success of the revolution on every level.

Despite its many insufficiencies, 'utopian socialism' posited a model of Revolution founded in the existent, in the Real, while 'dialectical materialism' posits a model of Revolution founded in the Imaginary, as always deferred, ahead—in the 'next life'.

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